



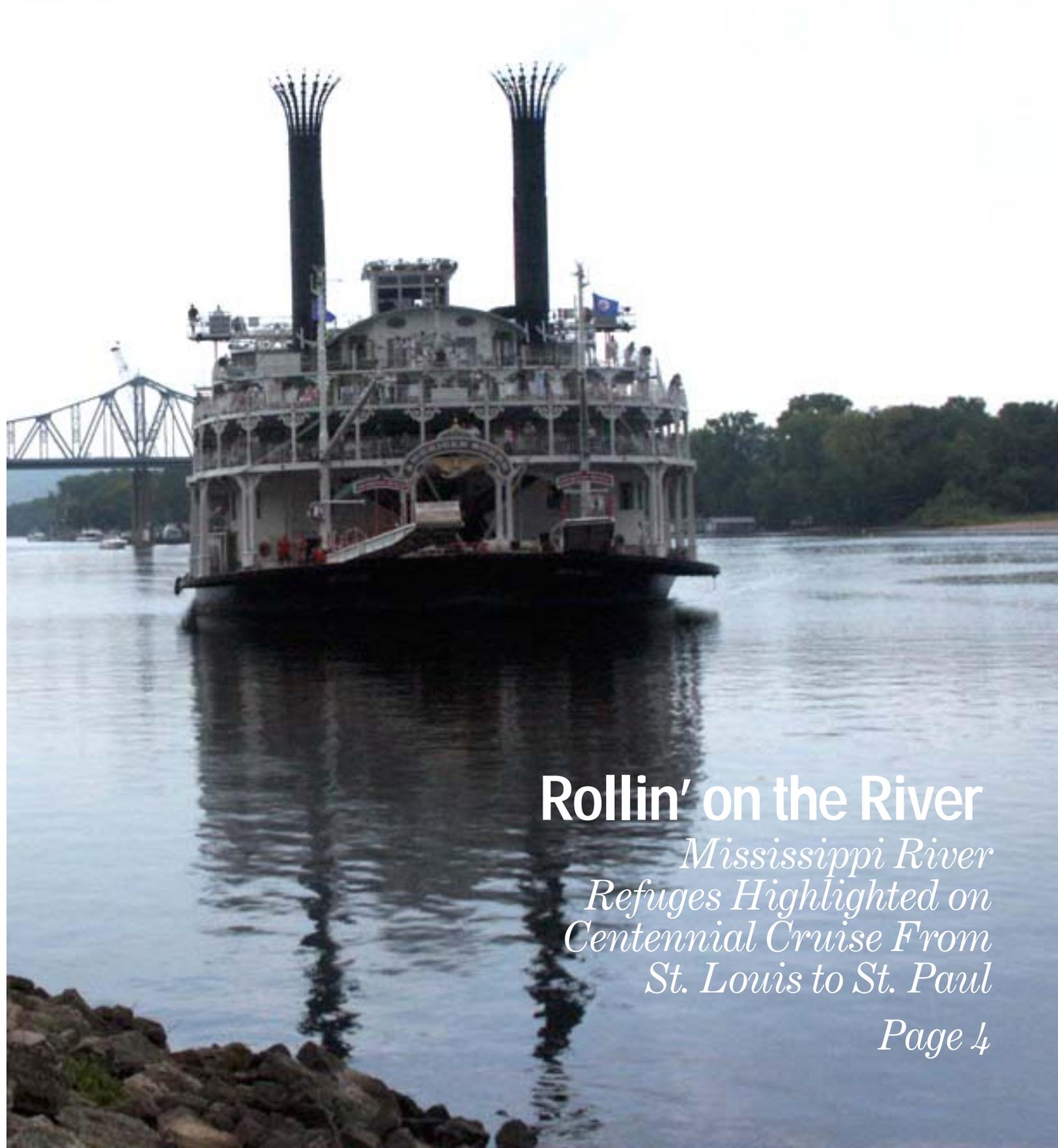
CELEBRATING A
CENTURY
of CONSERVATION

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

News & Views

Information For National Wildlife Refuge System Professionals in Region 3

Volume 2, Number 3 November 6, 2003



Rollin' on the River

*Mississippi River
Refuges Highlighted on
Centennial Cruise From
St. Louis to St. Paul*

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News, Notes and Jottings

The Road To Funding Success

Under the Transportation Equity Act for the Twenty-First Century (TEA-21) Congress authorized the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to cooperate with federal land management agencies in the planning development and operation of Transportation Enhancement (TE) and Scenic Byways Programs. The Service has actively and visibly supported these programs by sponsoring the National Scenic Byways Conferences in 2001 and 2003 and by designating TEA-21 Coordinators in several Region Offices, including Region 3. The TEA-21 reauthorization bill is expected to pass before the September 30, 2003 deadline.

Both TE and/or Scenic Byways programs can provide stations with new construction money for eligible projects. Each State operates differently when administering the grant applications and grants come in all types, sizes, and funding levels. To find out more about the TE and/or Scenic Byways programs and the type of projects that are funded go to <http://www.enhancements.org> and/or <http://www.byways.org>

Karen Nagengast is our Regional TEA-21 Coordinator. Contact her at 612/713-5407 to determine the eligibility of your dream project.

Simply The Best

That's what you get when you combine the collective talents of the nation's premier wildlife art family, wildlife, and 100 years of conservation. Titled "A Century of Conservation", the Hautman brothers Jim, Bob, and Joe have collaborated to create a unique art print combining three scenes from the National Wildlife Refuge System. Featuring pelicans, mallards, and an avocet, the combined print showcases wildlife from all four major North American flyways.

Produced by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, these limited-edition, signed and numbered prints are available for \$250 unframed, or \$400 for a professionally-framed print (prices include shipping, handling and insurance). Proceeds from the sale will be matched by the Foundation and other partners and used for habitat restoration projects on Service lands. To view the artwork and to obtain an order form, go to "<http://midwest.fws.gov/CenturyPrint.pdf>" or contact the Friends of Minnesota Valley at 952-858-0737. Only 1,000 prints have been produced, so order yours today.

Adding Voices to Tiling Debate

Several members of the Mississippi Headwaters/Tallgrass Prairie Ecosystem team were active participants in the summer meeting of The Minnesota Chapter of the Wildlife Society. The meeting focused on the effects of new tile systems on wildlife and the environment and was held at the Morris WMD offices. Presentations by Region 3 Ecosystem Biologist Tim Yager; Rex Johnson (HAPET), Jerry Wright University of Minnesota Agricultural Extension, and Larry Lewis retired Service employee, covered some of the environmental consequences of tile drainage as well as the agricultural benefits associated with this practice. A field trip to view recently installed tile systems in the Morris, Minn., area highlighted the afternoon session of the meeting. The Minnesota Chapter of the Wildlife Society's is developing a position/policy paper on this topic.

Director Drops In on DeSoto NWR

The ceremonial signing of a hunting reciprocity agreement and dedication of a new wetland and visitor center exhibits highlighted DeSoto refuge's Centennial celebration July 13. Special guests on hand included Rep. Doug Bereuter of Nebraska, Rep. Steve King, of Iowa, Service Director Steve Williams and members of the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and Iowa DNR.

The reciprocity agreement between the Service, Iowa DNR and Nebraska Game and Parks Commission allows hunters to follow a single set of rules while hunting on DeSoto NWR. It also increases the acres available for white tailed deer muzzleloader hunting by 700 acres (to 3,786 acres); and increases the number of muzzleloader permits available to hunters. Archery hunters will now be able to hunt white tailed deer on 2,355 acres in both Iowa and Nebraska.



Sartell's entry is based on a photo he took while hunting on a slough in North Dakota

Minnesota's Scot Storm Wins Federal Duck Stamp Contest

Sartell, Minn., artist Scot Storm's acrylic painting of a pair of redheads bested 213 entries from wildlife artists across the nation, including fellow Minnesotan Jim Hautman, to win the 2003 Federal Duck Stamp Contest. The painting will become the 2004-2005 Federal Duck Stamp, which goes on sale July 1, 2004.

This is his first win in 12 attempts. He has also won three state conservation stamp contests. Three-time

winner Jim Hautman finished in second place.

"I choked and my hands started shaking, that usually does not happen," said Storm when asked how he felt when Interior Secretary Gale Norton called him to announce his victory. "It is hard to put in words what a great honor this is, to win the prestigious Duck Stamp contest. It has not hit me yet that I am in the midst of all these great artist that came before me."

Middle Miss, DeSoto Refuge Officers Assist With Homeland Security

Region 3's John Magera, manager at Middle Mississippi River refuge, and Steve Van Riper, refuge operations specialist at DeSoto NWR helped support the National Park Service during Independence Day events at the Jefferson Expansion National Monument (commonly known as the St. Louis Arch.) Magera and Van Riper were among six refuge officers from across the nation who responded to a request for specialized security assistance to guard the nation's icons over the July 4th weekend.

The City of St. Louis hosts its annual three-day "Fair St. Louis" that attracts over a million people to the 90-acre monument grounds. The detail began with a day long briefing followed by three shifts at one of the seven security checkpoints. Each refuge officer logged more than 50 hours on their feet during the four-day event. Approximately 400,000 people who visited the fair each day were screened for weapons and other security risks. Each day, several weapons, illegal narcotics and other contraband were seized at the checkpoints.



Refuge Officer Rob Hirschboeck displays a small mountain of fireworks confiscated from just one person over the Independence Day weekend.

Officers Foil Plans For Refuge 4th Celebration

When it comes to fireworks on refuge lands, the issue is pretty clear cut-- fireworks are not allowed! Believe it or not, the fireworks pictured above were seized from a single person July 5, 2003, by refuge officers Rob Hirschboeck and Randy Lilla on the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. The per-

son was camping on an island north of Wabasha, Minnesota. While certain types of fireworks were recently legalized in Minnesota, about 95 percent of the fireworks seized are illegal under state law and 100 percent illegal on the refuge. In addition to losing his fireworks, the individual was assessed a \$200 fine.

Chief's Corner

Summer is over and the snow is beginning to fall. From my field visits and those of other Regional Office staff I know it was a productive field season. Because of end of year travel restrictions, we received few visits from field staff here in the Regional Office, so I wanted give you all at least a snapshot of what's been happening here.

As some of you know—because you were directly involved—much time and energy in the last couple of months has been spent preparing for, or participating in, the recent KPMG audits of our financial and property records. We have survived this scrutiny relatively unscathed; kudos go out to the staffs at Horicon, Minnesota Valley, Crab Orchard and Muscatatuck for their diligence. Likewise, a tip of the hat to Doug Johnson, Bill Anderson and our Engineering staff here in the Regional Office for their efforts. Keeping our financial affairs in order requires a team effort and diligence at many different levels. And I know it detracts from the field activities you need to do and would rather be doing. Thank you everyone!

What do you do? How do you do it? What do you think? How do you feel? It seems every time we turn around we are

asked to participate in a survey or take a test. The latest of these was the Gallop survey. While sometimes time-consuming, and usually distracting, remember the goal of these surveys, such as ABC and Gallop, as well as information security training, is to make the workplace more pleasant, rewarding, safer, and productive. If we continue to do things the way we always have, we will continue to achieve the same result. In some cases that's a good thing. But in a climate of change – fiscal, regulatory, political and biological – standing firmly in place means you're losing ground.

One historical concept I do embrace is the 100th anniversary of the National Wildlife Refuge System. We are just coming off a number of great events during refuge week, a high-profile event at the Detroit River refuge in September; and a fabulous multi-refuge event on the Mississippi River the end of July. I'm proud of the effort all stations have made this year to deliver our conservation messages. We are in the midst of a tremendous conservation milestone! And it's no mistake you are a part of it. The best and the brightest got us to where we are today, just as they will carry us into the future.



Centennial Print Honors Refuge Officers

Minnesota's renowned Hautman brothers aren't the only artists who have created prints commemorating the Centennial of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Illinois wildlife artist Anthony Padgett has created a special tribute to refuge law enforcement officers that is chock full of symbolism and historical imagery. Proceeds benefit the NWRS Officers Association. You can get more information about the special print on the web at www.anthonypadgett.com or by calling 800-994-9278.



Photo by Scott Flaherty

The American Queen steams in to La Crosse, Wis., July 31.

Celebrating a Century of Conservation Cruise Casts Spotlight on Upper Mississippi River Refuges

The riverboat *American Queen* and its 430-plus passengers was the centerpiece of an unprecedented week-long celebration of the 100th birthday of the National Wildlife Refuge System July 26 to August 2.

The luxury paddlewheeler departed St. Louis, Mo., July 26 for a “Celebrating a Century of Conservation” cruise of the Upper Mississippi River. In addition to outreach activities onboard, passengers

joined locals and tourists at port city celebrations in Hannibal, Mo., Dubuque, Iowa, La Crosse, Wis., and Wabasha, Minn. The celebration attracted more than 5,000 people in all, and heralded the enduring contributions of the Upper Mississippi Refuge and the Mark Twain Refuge Complex to the Great Lakes - Big Rivers’ region’s quality of life. The tour

continued next page



In La Crosse, Wis., Rep. Ron Kind spoke about the value of the Upper Miss refuge complex to the people of Wisconsin.



Photos by Scott Flaherty

RD meets TR at the Hannibal, Mo., event.



Members of the St. Louis-based World Bird Sanctuary conducted live raptor programs for visitors to the Hannibal, Mo., event July 28. The Hannibal event included live music and a program from the Missouri Department of Conservation.



Photos by Scott Flaherty

Clyde Male's "How to Build and Eagle Nest" presentation was a huge draw at the Dubuque event.



"How to band a duck" was another popular hands on station for kids at the Dubuque event.

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Centennial Cruise

was conducted in cooperation with the Delta Queen Steamboat Company and Historic Tours and Cruises, Inc. Upper Miss Park Rangers Cindy Samples and Pam Steinhaus served as on-board Centennial Ambassadors, conducting education and interpretive programs daily.

Port city stops involved staff from the Upper Mississippi River Refuge complex as well as the Missouri Department of Conservation, Iowa and Wisconsin Departments of Natural Resources, National Eagle Center, Izaak Walton League, Audubon Society, National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium, World Bird Sanctuary and others partners. Events featured numerous interactive educational displays and events, live music, art contests and much, much, more. State dignitaries joined in the events, including Rep. Ron Kind of Wisconsin, Iowa Department of Natural Resources Deputy Director Liz Christiansen, Iowa Gov. and Refuge System Chief Bill Hartwig.

Hats off to the small Army of refuge staff, Friends members and regional office volunteers who pulled together to make this event the Service's premiere Centennial event of the summer. Port city



continued next page

The Wisconsin Centennial Quilt is unveiled at the LaCross event.



Photos by Scott Flaherty

Released during the Wabasha event, this rehabilitated bald eagle eagerly makes his way to an island on the Upper Mississippi River Refuge.

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Centennial Cruise

events were coordinated by Michael Dixon (Hannibal, Mo.) Tim Loose, (Dubuque, Iowa) Ann Blankenship, (LaCrosse, Wis.) and Cindy Samples, (Wabasha, Minn.) A week's work of on-board activities, such as daily birding workshops, blue-goose walks and more, were conducted by Cindy Samples and Pam Steinhaus.



The Centennial banner was affixed to the upper deck of the American Queen.



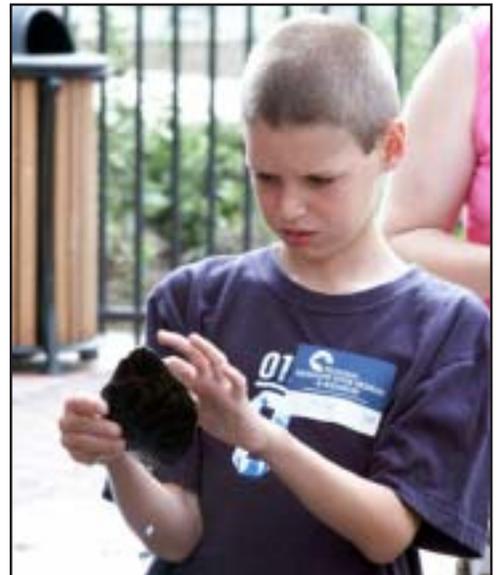
Photographer Karen Hollingsworth personalizes a copy of the Smithsonian Book of National Wildlife Refuges for Suzanne Baird, assistant refuge supervisor.



Don Hultman, manager of the Upper Mississippi River Refuge Complex, tells an audience in Wabasha, Minn., about the wonders of the Upper Miss refuges...and about his business card.



Biologist Tim Yager (above) talks freshwater mussels at the Iowa DNR mussel exhibit at the Dubuque event, while a young visitor (below) experiences a three ridge mussel.



New Facilities Management Coordinator

Now that he's been out to a few field stations, some of you have met our new Facilities Management Coordinator (FMC), Rob Miller. Rob is responsible for verification of the Real Property Inventory (RPI) and completing comprehensive facility condition assessments of constructed assets, such as buildings, dikes, and water control structures. As part of the assessment, Rob will verify or determine current replacement costs, identify deficiencies and estimate repair costs. With the increased emphasis and scrutiny being put on the RPI, it's important to ensure the inventory is accurate and complete.

The condition assessments and repair estimates are then given to MMS Coordinator Doug Johnson to create MMS projects for your stations. The amount of MMS funds requested directly relates to the amount of MMS funds each station receives. Over time, the results of these efforts should increase the MMS funding for each field station. The end goal is to allow Region 3 NWRs and WMDs to contract out most construction and major repair work, allowing field staff to redirect their time and energy to other important tasks.

Rob is scheduled to conduct an assessment of each field station at least once during every five year period. For more information on the program, give him a call at 612-713-5297.

Invasive Plant Wages Chemical Warfare

While scientists often assume that invasive plant species thrive in their new environments because of a lack of predators, a new study suggests that some invasives may take over using chemical warfare.

The spotted knapweed releases a poison through its roots that kills nearby plants, according to a study in the current issue of the journal *Science*.

The poison is such an effective herbicide, said Jorge Vivanco, a plant biologist at Colorado State University and an author of the study, that the university has patented it.



Swappin' Stories

Bob Dreislein, Winona District manager of the the Upper Miss Refuge complex swaps stories with Ron Schara during Schara's visit to the Refuge in August. Schara and crew filmed areas of the refuge for an upcoming piece on the NWRs Centennial to air sometime in November. Schara, a long-time outdoor columnist for the Minneapolis Star Tribune also hosts "Minnesota Bound," on KARE-11 Television in the Twin Cities and "Adventures with Ron and Raven" on ESPN Outdoors.

Fire Departments Share \$353,000 in Grants

Fifty-five rural fire departments that help protect refuge lands in six Region 3 states recently received a share of more than \$353,000 in Rural Fire Assistance Program grants.

This year, more than \$10 million was distributed nationally to small fire departments. Region 3 got an extra funding boost of about \$80,000 after Region 2 returned unused funds to DOI.

Fire departments in Minnesota (21), Wisconsin (9), Illinois (9), Indiana (6), Missouri (7), Iowa (2) and Michigan (1) received grants.

The cost-share program requires the fire departments to contribute 10 percent of the grant total with the federal government contributing 90 percent. Fire departments and total grant amounts (local contribution plus federal share) are as follows:

Minnesota (21) Total award: \$163,550.31
Pickwick, \$2,697; Rollingstone, \$4,500; Clinton, \$7,931.11; Ortonville, \$16,666.67; Dalton, \$19,564.44; Elizabeth, \$8,700; Green Isle, \$10,826.67; Hamburg, \$4,600; Lake Crystal, \$4,500; New Auburn \$4,444.44; Carver, \$4,320.00; Brooten, \$13,326.28; Starbuck, \$10,650.00; Morris,

\$19,593; Palisade, 4,642; Erskine, \$5,460; Mentor, \$2,000; Windom, \$3,668.22; Jackson, \$4,969.50; Jeffers, \$3,085; Elbow-Tulaby Lake, \$7,405.48.

Wisconsin (9) Total award: \$41,181.26
Brownsville, \$1,670; Kekoskee, \$12,406; Montello, \$6,500; Oakfield, \$2,973; Waupun, \$3,612.78; Lamartine, \$5,416.65; Town of Lincoln, \$2,848; Stoddard-Bergen, \$3,438.50; Tri-Community, \$2,316.

Illinois (9) Total award: \$49,480.19
Lake Egypt, \$5,260; Makanda Township, \$1,590; Williamson County \$3,999.99; Dongola, \$3,860; Ullin, \$4,338; Lewistown, \$3,700; Alexandria, \$3,936.20; Havana, \$19,837; Ridge Lake, \$2,959.

Missouri (7) Total award: \$30,921.44
Cooper County, \$5,660; Pleasant Hill, \$2,518.26; Calumet Township, \$5,222.22; Butler County, \$3,850; Lowndes, \$3,639; Puxico, \$3,456.96; Wappapello, \$6,575.

Indiana (6) Total award: \$36,114.16
Lockhart Township, \$2,921.60; Owensville-Montgomery, \$6,200.25; South Patoka, \$795.91; Union, \$13,409; Columbia, \$10,457.40; Francisco, \$2,300.

Iowa (2) Total award: \$20,348.87

Baneroft, \$7,299.96; New Albin, \$13,058.91

Michigan (1) Total award: \$12,300. to Spaulding Township.



Views

Comment: Detroit River Refuge Reflects Long Legacy of Conservation

This commentary by Sec. Gale Norton appeared in the Detroit Free Press September 25, 2003

One of the most appealing aspects about America is that the best ideas in our country are not thought up by a committee, handed down by edict from a high official or invented in the back office of a government bureaucracy. Rather, they come from the people, often working in partnership with each other; who capture a vision and then pursue it until it becomes real.

This week at Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge, we are celebrating the 100th anniversary of one of America's best ideas, the National Wildlife Refuge System.

There are many famous names associated with this great network of lands, the largest in the world dedicated to wildlife conservation, including Teddy Roosevelt, who founded the refuge system with a stroke of his pen in 1903. But it was an obscure German immigrant, Paul Kroegel, who had the vision that became a reality on Roosevelt's desk. In doing so, he demonstrated that one person — with dedication and fearless conviction — can make a contribution for conservation that will last for generations. His life reminds us that we too can make a difference.

In 1903, Kroegel lived on a house on the banks of Florida's Indian River. At the time, ladies' hats festooned with bird feathers were the fashion rage. To collect feathers, market hunters greedily decimated bird populations on a small island off the shore, Pelican Island, annihilating entire flocks in a single outing. Kroegel took a stand against the slaughter at great personal risk. Market hunters sometimes murdered those who opposed them. Kroegel did not back down in the face of the violence, and eventually Roosevelt heard about his exploits.

When Roosevelt signed the order establishing Pelican Island as our first refuge, he named Kroegel as the first refuge manager at a salary of \$1 a month, paid by the Audubon Society because there was no federal appropriation. This single courageous man, with a badge and a gun and a boat, stood watch over Pelican Island until 1926.

Today, the National Wildlife Refuge System has 540 refuges in all 50 states encompassing a total area the size of Montana. It includes examples of virtually every ecosystem in the United States. You



Photo by Jim Hudgins

Secretary Gale Norton and Director Steve Williams sign autographs at the Detroit River International Refuge Centennial celebration in September.

can watch grizzlies fish for salmon on Alaska's Kenai peninsula while bald eagles soar overhead. You can wander the rain forests of Hawaii and see tropical birds that live nowhere else in the world. You can gaze skyward on the Texas gulf coast and see a flock of whooping cranes complete their 2,400-mile migration from Manitoba.

It is appropriate that we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the system at Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge because it represents the fulfillment of a new vision for the refuge system.

Detroit River, the first international refuge and one of only a few refuges located in an urban area, is the creation of a diverse partnership. Local citizens, conservation groups and businesses joined forces to reach a common goal: to set aside vital habitat on an industrial river to the benefit of wildlife and the enjoyment of sportsmen and others who cherish the beauty and majesty of nature. The refuge provides a home for 29 species of waterfowl, 65 kinds of fish, and 300 species of migratory birds.

The refuge also provides opportunities for the people in the Detroit-Windsor area to enjoy a place of quiet and solitude and of unfettered natural beauty in an increas-

ingly crowded and busy world.

As we celebrate the centennial of the refuge system, President George W. Bush is committed to ensuring that Detroit River and other refuges remain healthy and whole for the next 100 years. His proposed \$402-million budget for the National Wildlife Refuge System represents a 25 percent increase in funding since 2002 and more than double the 1997 budget.

Conservation in America, however, must continue to be a partnership between the government and the people. One of the greatest strengths of the refuge system is the number of Americans who donate their time and labor to their local refuges.

Overall, 40,000 people volunteer on refuges, donating a million hours of their time each year. No one asks for any credit. They do it out of love for wild places and wild creatures. They do it because one person can make a difference.

As we celebrate this 100th anniversary, the spirit of Paul Kroegel is very much alive at Detroit River and in our refuge system across America. We invite the people of the Detroit area to work with us to hand down this priceless treasure to future generations.

Agency Values Refuges

This editorial, written by USFWS Director Steve Williams, was published in the Oct. 9, 2003 edition of the USA Today

The National Wildlife Refuge System is one of America's great treasures. Its 542 refuges provide homes for wildlife, solitude and unfettered natural beauty for visitors in an increasingly crowded and busy world.

President Bush has made a firm commitment to ensure their future health. His proposed \$402 million budget for the refuge system represents a 25 percent increase since 2002 and more than double the 1997 budget.

As Congress' General Accounting Office notes in its report, however, about one-quarter of refuges have oil and gas operations on them, some dating back more than 70 years. In most cases, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service owns the surface land but not the subsurface mineral rights. Under the law, owners of these rights have the right of access to them. Refuge managers work with these owners to minimize the adverse impacts of these activities, but we still face challenges. We welcome the recommendations provided by the GAO in its report.

We are committed to collecting better data on the impacts of oil and gas activities on refuges. We also will issue guidance and more training opportunities for refuge staff on the management of oil and gas activities.

In the few places where the service has authority to issue permits, we will look for ways to strengthen that authority consistent with state and federal laws. At the same time, we are addressing other threats to our refuges, including the damage caused by growing numbers of invasive species.

Some have tried to use the GAO report to argue against oil exploration on a small part of Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. However, the comparison is not valid because the federal government owns the mineral rights at the Arctic refuge. When it set aside a portion of the refuge, Congress explicitly reserved for itself how and under what conditions oil exploration might occur there. Any exploration would be subject to far stricter environmental safeguards than allowed by law on most refuges with oil and gas activities



Photo by Scott Flaherty

On behalf of Gov. Tim Pawlenty, Ft. Snelling State Park Manager Dan Brevia accepts the commemorative Pendleton Centennial blanket from Regional Director Robyn Thorson, Refuge Manager Rick Schultz and Park Ranger Scott Ford.

Minnesota Valley NWR Celebrates Centennial With Riverboat Tour of the Minnesota River

Minnesota Valley NWR hosted a special Centennial riverboat tour of the Minnesota River portion of the refuge for more than 150 partners, friends and guests of the Refuge, October 8. The day-long tour aboard the St. Paul-based excursion vessel *Jonathan Padelford*, included a land tour stop near the Old Cedar Bridges and several short programs by guest speakers.

Park Service Ranger Charlie McGuire, the "Singing Ranger," observed his final working day with with Park Service by singing songs for passengers. The Friends of Minnesota Valley provided an excellent catered lunch.

Regional Director Robyn Thorson delivered brief remarks

and presented a commemorative Pendleton blanket to the State of Minnesota in recognition of the Minnesota's support to the NWRS Centennial. Karen Hollingsworth was on hand to sign copies of her centennial book, and all participants were provided with centennial related gifts and information.

Outdoor print and broadcast journalist Ron Schara served as master of ceremonies for the day, and really set the tone for a marvelous experience for everyone.

A picture-perfect fall day added to the beauty of the refuge tour. Passengers directed binoculars and cameras toward wildlife along the river bank, and above the boat, including several bald eagles.

Log Cabin Day Draws 500 to Muscatatuck NWR

The Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge friends group, the Muscatatuck Wildlife Society, hosted the annual "Log Cabin Day" community festival on Muscatatuck October 18, 2003, in celebration of National Wildlife Refuge Week.

The festival, held at the historic

Myers Cabin area of the refuge, featured a free ham and bean dinner, old-time crafts, blacksmiths, music, a storyteller, kids activities, and horse/mule-drawn wagon rides into the refuge closed area.

A record crowd of over 500 people attended the celebration.

Shiawassee NWR Celebrates 50 Years With Full-Moon Hike

Shiawassee NWR and the Friends of Shiawassee NWR celebrated National Wildlife Refuge Week and Shiawassee's 50th birthday October 10, 2003, by hosting a Full Moon Hike.

Sixty participants of all ages showed up for the guided five mile hike along the Refuge trails under the light of the full moon. Friends member and Refuge Volunteer Steve Gasser led the hike. Other volunteers and Refuge staff were on hand to help out. Hikers were treated with a warm evening with clear skies which afforded them great views of Venus, Mercury, lots of stars and of course the moon.

The Friends group provided refreshments of apple cider, donuts and apples at the halfway point. The hike was kicked off with a brief overview of the National Wildlife Refuge System and its Centennial and the 50th birthday of the Shiawassee NWR. Hikers received numerous Centennial items and brochures to take home. Self-Serve Lumber donated 20 small flashlights to hand out to the families. Five Friends members/Refuge Volunteers and three Refuge staff worked the event.



Interior Bill Clears Senate; Awaits President's Signature

The Senate on Monday Nov. 3, passed the fiscal 2004 interior appropriations bill, clearing the measure for President Bush's signature.

The vote on the bill (HR 2691, H. Rpt. 108-330), which cleared the House Oct. 30, was 87-2.

The \$19.66 billion bill includes \$1.7 billion for the Department of Energy, \$850 million for Bureau of Land Management operations, \$1.63 billion for national park operations, **\$1.3 billion for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**, and \$4.5 billion for the Forest Service.



Representative Mark Kennedy (standing) speaks with visitors to Sherburne NWR's Wildlife Festival Saturday, Oct. 8.

400 Flock to Sherburne NWR for Festival

More than 400 visitors, including Minnesota Congressman Mark Kennedy, attended the 10th annual Wildlife Festival October 11 at Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge.

Guided tours led by refuge staff and volunteers included an early morning crane watch, a nature walk, and a history bus tour to teach about lifestyles in the area in 1903.

Presentations included archery hunting by the Coon Rapids Archery Club, binoculars and spotting scopes by National Camera Exchange, waterfowl by Refuge Biologist Jeanne Holler, and a live raptor program by the Wildlife Science Center.

Other activities included the coloring of blue goose mobiles, a prairie seeds and tea exhibit, a wildlife scavenger hunt, a wildlife expo, archery and air rifle workshops, decoy carving, face painting, equipment used for prescribed burning, a bonfire and a refuge system quiz board. Visitors received Centennial lapel pins, second-day cancellation caches with the Pelican Island



Instruction in the fine art of carving waterfowl decoys was part of the festival.

postage stamp, centennial cake, blue goose mobiles, and centennial posters.

The Friends of Sherburne displayed their refuge system centennial quilt which was created with wildlife quilt squares made by Friends members and volunteers. Most activities were held outdoors due to the limited capacity of the one room school house.

A number of refuge service roads

were open during the event to allow vehicle travel into the interior of the refuge.

The event was co-sponsored by the refuge and the Friends of Sherburne with assistance from the Coon Rapids Archery Club, DNR Firearms Safety Instructors, the Sherburne County Historical Society, National Camera Exchange, the Wildlife Science Center, and over 80 volunteers!

The Friends of Sherburne secured the support of 25 businesses from eight towns within 30 miles of the refuge making it possible for them to offer a free event for the public.

Centennial Exhibit Opens at Smithsonian Nov. 7

Federal Highway Administration Joins Service in Celebration

The long-awaited and much publicized exhibit, "America's Wildest Places: Our National Wildlife Refuge System," is scheduled to open Nov. 7 at the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C.

Years in the planning, the much-anticipated exhibit has picked up a partner in the Department of Transportation.

The multi-media exhibition docent-led programs, films, and a host of hands-on displays about the National Wildlife Refuge System and our country's network of "America's Byways," a collection of distinct and diverse roads designated by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation.

"America's Wildest Places" will be on view through April 11, 2004.

The exhibit will present the Refuge System's pioneering work to preserve the nation's natural treasures even as suburban growth replaces important habitat. The unique exhibition also will examine how technology has dramatically improved wildlife and habitat management and preservation.

Visitors will be encouraged to use the national scenic byways to reach wildlife refuges, many of which are just an hour's drive from major metropolitan areas.

"America's Wildest Places is part of the Smithsonian's celebration of the 100th anniversary of the National



Photo by Scott Flaherty

Big Oaks NWR is part of the Refuge Centennial exhibit opening Nov. 7.

Wildlife Refuge System, a hallmark of our nation's rich wildlife conservation heritage," said Cristian Samper, director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History. "We are pleased to join the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Federal Highway Administration in mounting this timely and landmark exhibition."

"The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is proud to bring to our nation's capitol virtual tours of seven of our best wildlife refuges, each located along one of America's Byways. We look forward to hosting visitors at these and other refuges after they learn about the Refuge System from this fabulous exhibition," said Steve Williams, Service director.

"This exhibition will remind people from around the world that Americans care deeply about nature and the environment and that this is reflected in our government policy," said Mary E. Peters, head of the Federal Highway Administration. "I invite visitors to start with this exhibition and then to experience America's history and beauty by taking a trip on one of our scenic byways."

Exhibition visitors will be able to examine wildlife in a variety of habitats through visual images and hands-on displays. Among other themes, the exhibit will emphasize how the Refuge System's growth has reflected changing conservation values over the past 100 years. It also highlights important figures and events in American history that have affected Wildlife Refuges, and the network of national scenic byways that provide access to the nation's most outstanding natural areas.

Service, Tribes Negotiating Specific Functions For Management of National Bison Range NWR

According to an article in the Nov. 4 issue of the *Lake County Leader* in Polson, Montana, negotiations are continuing between the Service and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai tribes regarding specific functions and activities occurring on the National Bison Range NWR that could be transferred to the tribes.

"People have high anxiety that the tribes would be getting complete management of the Bison Range," said Paul Hoffman, deputy assistant for Fish and Wildlife and Parks and lead facilitator of the negotiations.

"That's not what's being negotiated." In the article, Hoffman states that at a minimum, the Bison Range will still maintain a Fish and Wildlife Service manager, and will still be run under the powers and regulations of the National Wildlife System Improvement Act.

Negotiations on specifics began in September and focus on proposed specific activities at the Bison Range and Ninepipe and Pablo refuges within the Flathead Reservation. Examples of functions being negotiated may include management of tribal

employees and payroll for those employees, biological activities such as bird and waterfowl banding, and various fire, maintenance and visitor services, the article said.

Other opportunities may include the tribe's participation in long-term planning and student training for career employees. Any draft agreement will be subject to a 90-day comment period.

Read the entire article on the web: <http://leaderadvertiser.com/index.asp?Sec=News&str=1500>